For Hearts That Shrink or Swell, Alike Will Break

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by amoralagent

Summary

"Hey, what are you--" He then noticed the little body hidden behind Hannibal's own, a small blonde girl of about four, who had noticeably been crying from the puffy redness of her tearful eyes, her breathing still choppy and sniffly. She looked surprised at Will's presence. He was equally surprised.

Will loses Hannibal at the store, and finds that he's made a new friend in a lost girl that needs their help.

Notes

Title: Joy May Kill by Michelangelo Buonarroti

See the end of the work for more notes

Will managed to lose Hannibal. Christ knows how. He stopped to choose between peaches and persimmons for *two* seconds, and he turns around to find himself alone. Peeking over the top of the aisles, he doesn't see silver-brown hair in a bun, and sighs heavily. He swears sometimes it's like having a fucking child when he decides to wander off to wherever his nose takes him. Silently, too.

In retaliation, Will dropped a few of both the fruits in the basket, and pushed the cart to go to far side of the store, predicting him to be perusing the most expensive wines. If not, he'd probably be in the deli counter. Disappearing acts aside, Will fucking hated having to go grocery shopping. The paranoia of security cameras was enough, compounded by all the people, and Hannibal fussing about they should and shouldn't get. This was normally Hannibal's job, but he hadn't been out of the house in three weeks, so he needed fresh air to avoid going insane, supposedly. He marked it down to Hannibal just wanting his company. But then he goes AWOL on him. *Typical*.

Halfway to the meat section, he heard the familiar timbre of Hannibal's voice and had to stop and drag the cart back. He was crouching down, looking at the different assortments of honey, and-- *talking to himself?*

Will ditched the cart and went over to him, "Hey, what are you--" He then noticed the little body hidden behind Hannibal's own, a small blonde girl of about four, who had noticeably been crying from the puffy redness of her tearful eyes, her breathing still choppy and sniffly. She looked surprised at Will's presence. He was equally surprised.

"Will, this is Sofia. Sofia. This is Will." Will didn't like the fact that he wasn't using an alias, even if it was to someone who wouldn't remember. The child only blinked a little, and looked worried, "I'm afraid she's lost her mother, and because of my hair, I think she assumed she'd found her. When I turned around, she started to cry."

Will sighed, whispering under his breath, "I don't blame her."

Hannibal pretended not to hear him, standing up carefully, "She's asked me to help her in her quest."

"Okay... *well*--" Just as Will was about to speak, the girl grabbed Hannibal's cuff and pulled, and unlike Will had ever seen him before, Hannibal allowed her to do so, and let her lead him down the aisle and past him. He'd never seen Hannibal anywhere near a child, let alone interact with one, "Hang on." Will turned the corner to find Hannibal lifting her into their shopping cart upon her request, unpacking and handing her one of the peaches when she pointed to them pleadingly.

"The front desk should be able to help you. You needn't worry. Okay?" Hannibal spoke to her softly, to reassure, and gave her a careful smile. Will's heart almost stopped beating. He had a new happiness to him, something like pride, and, despite appearances, he looked gentle.

Hannibal was calm as he explained the situation to one of the employees, who led them to a desk and promptly announced the lost child over the speakers.

Expression oddly affectless, Hannibal watched the girl holding the peach, not eating it. Apparently, she liked that it was fuzzy, as it felt like a hamster. Will absently wondered what the fuck kind of hamster she'd ever seen, and was quietly concerned that Hannibal looked sad all of the sudden. Maybe struck by how precious the explanation was. Maybe struck by a memory. Either way, he seemed deep in thought. Asking him about it probably wouldn't be a good idea, so he filed it away for another time.

Eventually, the panicked mother rushed over, picking up the child and hugging her close, thanking Hannibal enthusiastically. She looked on the verge of tears. Will smiled at them, waving back as the kid waved her tiny hand in a quiet goodbye. When Hannibal took the cart again, steering away, Will gave him a sidelong glance.

"Since when were you good with kids?"

Hannibal was reading the label of some fancy onion pickle, and there was a smile in his eyes when he looked up, "I'm sure I'm good at plenty of things, you simply haven't had the chance to witness a lot of it."

Will hummed. Even after everything, Hannibal managed to surprise him now and again. He smiled fondly, sneaking a quick kiss to Hannibal's cheekbone, "Well. I hope I can witness it all."

End Notes

If you haven't read Hannibal Rising, Hannibal has a vivid memory of picking an aubergine/eggplant for Mischa and giving it to her because she likes the colour and it's warmth from the sun, and she laughs and holds it to her chest.

With that it mind, it makes it pretty fucking sad. Sorry.

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